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ABSTRACT

This report summarizes the progress made by schools participating in the Northeast (Pennsylvania) Chapter 1 Program Improvement Task Force during the 1990-91 and 1991-92 school years. The first section gives an overview of project activities, and the second presents a summary of what each school team accomplished in the school years studied. The third section summarizes the accomplishments of the project as a whole, and the fourth section considers the program activities that each school team plans for the 1992-93 school year. The Federal emphasis on Chapter 1 program improvement led the Pennsylvania Department of Education to challenge Research for Better Schools, Inc., and school districts to begin a self-improvement process spurred on by some planning funds, a waiver of traditional monitoring for the first 3 years of the project, and the opportunity to present the improvement design to other educators. Ten school districts participated in the project from the beginning, with 13 schools involved. Individual reports on these 13 schools are included. Each reported conducting staff development, parent education and participation workshops, and cooperative teacher planning, and the development of new materials and teaching methods. Each of the schools reported changes in teacher and classroom practices as a result of the program. Eight schools reported changes in how parents worked at home with their children, and all schools reported some positive effects on student achievement. (Contains two figures and three tables.) (SLD)

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CHAPTER 1 PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Progress Report for School Year
1991-92

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The report was prepared by Richard McCann of Research for Better Schools (RBS). RBS is the Mid-Atlantic Regional Educational Laboratory; its mission is to collaborate with state, intermediate, and local educational agencies to improve district, school, and classroom practice.

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INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes the progress made by schools participating in the Northeast Chapter 1 Program Improvement Task Force during school years 1990-91 and 1991-92. This report is organized into the following four sections.

- The first provides an overview of project activities, after briefly reviewing the place of this project in Pennsylvania Department of Education's Chapter 1 program improvement activities.

- The second presents a summary of what each school team accomplished during the school year as well as the next steps that each school team is planning to take.

- The third summarizes the accomplishments of the project as a whole.

- The fourth summarizes the types of program improvement activities that each school team plans for the 1992-93 school year, as well as the project activities planned for that year.

I. OVERVIEW OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Background

Since 1983, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), with the support of Research for Better Schools (RBS), has been exploring alternative strategies to support local Chapter 1 program improvement efforts. These strategies included the following.

- PDE participated in 1983-84 in a six-state collaborative project that was funded by the U.S. Department of Education to design and implement an across-state program improvement effort. That project developed a framework of 11 factors that research suggests may influence year-end basic skills achievement and a process by which the status of those factors could be assessed. By the end of the project, 68 teams had been trained and had successfully implemented the process in a school visit.

- PDE adapted both the framework and process of the six-state collaborative project for use by pairs of more and less successful Chapter 1 programs. Specifically,

  -- teams from paired schools received training in the process

  -- teams from more successful programs visited less successful programs to collect information that would suggest the status of each of the factors

  -- teams from the less successful programs conducted an exchange visit, seeking to understand why that program was more successful

  -- teams with the less successful programs participated in a program improvement planning workshop.

  The plans that were developed as a result of the workshop were made part of the participating schools' Chapter 1 applications. In some cases, PDE provided or sponsored assistance to schools needing help to implement selected activities described in their plans. Between 1985 and 1988, 42 school districts participated in this program improvement activity.

- In 1988, PDE incorporated four of the program improvement factors into the regular Chapter 1 monitoring process. Over 300 monitors were trained to interview school staff about the factors, and how to summarize and rate the information collected. Analysis of resultant monitoring reports provided PDE with information that enabled it to strengthen the quality of monitoring training.

  By the summer of 1991, all districts in the state had been monitored using the revised process. During that summer, RBS sponsored a third-party "tracer" study of the monitoring process. The study involved a telephone interview of a sample of monitors and a sample school staff

that received a monitoring visit. The results of the study suggested that the process had "helped school personnel to clarify and refocus their Chapter 1 objectives," that it had been a "staff development" and "growth opportunity" for the monitors, and that the monitors had used their experience monitoring as "input into program improvements for their own districts and their own school programs." Based on the study results, PDE is initiating a new cycle of monitoring in school year 1992-93.

During this same time period, PDE invited the Chapter 1 leadership in the School Districts of Philadelphia and Pittsburgh to select the program improvement factors that they wanted the monitors to focus on. Over the course of the yearly visits to schools in those districts, monitors have collected information on seven of the factors.

PDE Challenge

With the federal emphasis on program improvement, PDE challenged RBS, Intermediate Unit 18, subsequently, Intermediate Unit 19, and representatives from selected school districts in northeastern Pennsylvania to:

- design and implement a self-directed program improvement process that built on the the previous program improvement activities of PDE
- develop the capacity to support ongoing program improvement in their schools and in the region.

In presenting this challenge, PDE offered three incentives: (1) a modest amount of funds to support planning, staff development workshops, and selected implementation activities; (2) a waiver of traditional monitoring of the participating schools for the first three years of the project, as long as it received evidence that the schools were engaged in an ongoing process of program improvement; and (3) the opportunity to present the design to other Chapter 1 educators and intermediate unit staff in Pennsylvania, and to national audiences, assuming the design was successful.

The Project Design

The project was designed to provide the following kinds of support to interested schools and districts.

- Preparation of school teams. A two-day summer workshop is offered school teams. The workshop orients the teams to the project design, and then engages them in work on the first two steps of the program improvement planning process: (1) define the achievement problem(s) and use that definition to set an improvement goal(s), and (2) identify plausible explanations for the achievement problems and use those explanations to determine what changes in practice need to be made.

- Resource materials. To help school teams, RBS developed a resource book that describes a self-directed program improvement process. RBS also revised materials describing the factors that research suggests may influence Chapter 1 student achievement and the instruments for collecting information about those factors. Based on the first year's use of these materials, the resource book was substantially revised (Figure 1 presents the planning steps around which the resource book is organized).

- Follow-up workshops: One-day workshops are offered school teams several times during the school year. These workshops have two general purposes. The first is to provide teams with time and a place outside of their school to work on specific activities and tasks related to the program improvement planning process. The second is to provide teams an opportunity to learn from each other. The workshops also provide an opportunity for RBS and IU 19 staff to interact with each of the school teams about questions they have or support they need.

- School visits. IU 19 staff make visits to the participating schools. These visits serve two purposes. They enable the IU staff to develop a more detailed understanding of the status of each school's program improvement activities. They also enable the IU staff to identify needs that are shared by several of the schools -- needs that might be addressed by project funds or addressed by some common activity.

- IU-sponsored staff development programs. The staff development programs sponsored by the IU are open to the participating school teams.

- Year-end workshop. Close to the end of the school year, teams meet for a final time. The workshop provides teams an opportunity to share information about their activities and their accomplishments -- information that is summarized in the project's annual progress report. It also enables the teams to suggest activities the project should undertake in the coming year to serve common needs.

- Funds to cover workshop participation and one-time implementation costs. Funds provided to the project by the PDE are used to cover the costs associated with school teams' participation in the various workshops (travel, per diem, and, if necessary, substitutes). They are also used to cover one-time costs associated with the implementation of specific improvements.

Recruitment

Recruiting schools to participate in the project has been a collaborative effort of the PDE, the Intermediate Unit, and the representatives from school districts that assisted with the design effort. Together, they talked with Chapter 1 coordinators from school districts in the northeast corner of Pennsylvania who, they thought, would be interested in the project.

Figure 1

STEPS AND ACTIVITIES OF THE PLANNING PROCESS

STEP 1: IDENTIFY THE CHAPTER 1 ACHIEVEMENT PROBLEM(S) AND DEVELOP RELATED GOAL(S)

Step 1A: Identify the Chapter 1 Achievement Problem(s)

Activity 1: Develop Understanding of the Components of a Definition of an Achievement Problem or Goal
Activity 2: Analyze Information from a Standardized Achievement Test
Activity 3: Use Information from Other Indicators to Identify the Chapter 1 Achievement Problems
Activity 4: Decide Which Achievement Problems Will Be the Focus for the Program Improvement Effort
Activity 5: Summarize on Planning Form 1 the Decisions as to What Achievement Problems Will Be Addressed

Step 1B: Develop a Goal Statement for Each Achievement Problem

Activity 1: Recast the Problem Statements as Goals
Activity 2: Summarize on Planning Form 1 the Goal Statement for Each Achievement Problem

STEP 2: IDENTIFY THE MOST PLAUSIBLE EXPLANATIONS FOR AN ACHIEVEMENT PROBLEM AND DETERMINE CHANGES IN PRACTICE THAT WILL ADDRESS THOSE EXPLANATIONS

Step 2A: Identify the Most Plausible Explanations for an Achievement Problem

Activity 1: Develop Understanding of the Factors That Research Suggests May Influence Students' Achievement
Activity 2: Determine Which Research-based Factors Might Explain Why an Achievement Problem Exists
Option to Activity 2: Brainstorm Possible Explanations for an Achievement Problem
Activity 3: Determine Which Explanations Are the Most Plausible Ones
Activity 4: Summarize on Planning Form 2 the Decisions as to What Are the Most Plausible Explanations

Step 2B: Determine Changes in Practice That Will Address Each Explanation

Activity 1: Decide What Changes in Practice Are Suggested by Each Explanation
Activity 2: Summarize on Planning Form 2 the Changes in Practice to Be Made

STEP 3: IDENTIFY CONDITIONS THAT ARE SUPPORTIVE OR NON-SUPPORTIVE OF A CHANGE IN PRACTICE AND DETERMINE THE STRATEGIES THAT WILL BE EMPLOYED IN MAKING THE CHANGE IN PRACTICE

Step 3A: Identify Conditions That Are Supportive or Non-Supportive of a Change in Practice

Activity 1: Develop Shared Understanding of the Conditions That Can Be Supportive/Non-Supportive of a Change in Practice
Activity 2: Brainstorm Possible Conditions
Activity 3: Verify "the Reality" of the Possible Conditions
Activity 4: Summarize on Planning Form 3 the Conditions Verified

Step 3B: Determine the Strategies That Will Be Employed in Making the Change in Practice

Activity 1: Develop a Shared Understanding of the Strategies That Can Be Employed
Activity 2: Decide What Strategies to Employ to Make a Change in Practice Summarize on Planning Form 3 the Strategies to Be Employed

STEP 4: DEVELOP AN ACTION PLAN FOR MAKING THE CHANGES IN PRACTICE–A PLAN THAT REFLECTS THE STRATEGIES IDENTIFIED

STEP 5: DEVELOP A MONITORING/EVALUATION PLAN

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In the project's first year, coordinators who expressed an interest were asked to bring representative administrators and teachers to an orientation session. The orientation provided the participants an overview of project goals and activities, the proposed program improvement process, and the framework of program improvement factors. It also provided participants information about the level of effort that school staffs would be asked to make. Following the orientation, 10 school districts agreed to participate in the project; each district selected a school and recruited a team of the principal, regular classroom teachers, and Chapter 1 staff to participate in the August, 1990 workshop.

Based on the first year's experience, the project staff set forth the following criteria for schools and districts interested in joining the project.

- District and school staff agree with the premise that the full intent of the Chapter 1 desired outcomes will only be achieved when schools engage in ongoing program improvement.

- District and school leadership are prepared to create a school-level program improvement team made up of the principal, regular and Chapter 1 teachers, and, if appropriate, a district staff member.

- District and school leadership will enable the school team to participate in the project-sponsored workshops (the project will cover travel, per diem, and substitute costs related to a team's participation).

- District and school leadership will create conditions that will help the school team to implement the project's program improvement planning process. That process asks the team to review data to identify achievement problems, explore alternative explanations as to why the problem, to decide on the basis of those explanations what changes in practice should be made, to plan activities to make those changes in practice, and to develop a plan for monitoring and evaluating its improvement effort.

- District and school leadership will create conditions that will help the school implement its improvement plan.

With these criteria in hand, PDE and IU staff recruited four additional districts to join the project in the spring of the project's second year. In addition, one of the continuing districts asked if they each could invite another school to participate in the project. Thus, five new school teams joined the project in the summer of 1991. (It should be noted that two school teams chose not to participate in project activities during the 1991-92 school year.)

Project Activities

Activities that the project has conducted to date include the following.

- July 16, 1990: Half-day orientation for interested school districts and schools.
- August 23 and 24, 1990: Two-day school team orientation and planning workshop.
- October 21, 1990 and January 14, 1991: Two one-day follow-up workshops for team planning and team sharing.
- May 14, 1991: One-day, year-end workshop at which teams shared their accomplishments, heard and responded to an IU presentation on possible collaborative activities, and considered the results of a self-evaluation of their capacity to help new school teams participate in the project.
- August 22 and 23, 1991: Two-day "new" team orientation and planning workshop, involving "coaches" from continuing school teams.
- October 21, 1991 and January 16, 1992: Two one-day follow-up workshops for team planning and team sharing.
- May 20, 1991: One-day, year-end workshop at which teams shared their accomplishments, conducted seminars on specific practices they would recommend to others, and contributed to the development of project plans for school year 1992-93.

Documentation

The documentation effort of the project has had three parts. The first has involved the collecting and summarizing of information about each school team's plans, activities, and accomplishments. This information was used to prepare the individual school abstracts presented in the project's annual progress report (see section II).

The second has involved the assessments of the specific improvement efforts of the school teams. The plans for these assessments were generated by the school teams as part of the program improvement planning process. These plans identified the kinds of evidence that needed to be collected to determine the value of specific activities, to assess the extent to which the planned changes in practice were made, and to assess the extent to which the changes made contributed to the achievement of the improvement goal. The results of these evaluations have been shared with project staff and have been summarized in the individual school abstracts.

The third has involved the documentation of other effects of the project. At the beginning of the second year, the following five types of other project effects were identified:

- leadership and staff understanding of Chapter 1, the desired outcomes, and program improvement
- the level of effort that leadership/staff are expending on Chapter 1 program improvement
- the ways in which staff (regular teachers, Chapter 1 teachers, administrators) are working together on program improvement
- the process being used to plan and make improvements
- incidences of projects learning from or building upon the work of other projects.

The current results of this documentation activity are summarized in section III of this report.

II. STATUS OF INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL'S IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES

This section presents a brief summary of the activities of each of the participating school teams. The summary describes:

- the Chapter 1 student achievement problem(s) identified as a result of school team analysis of student achievement data and other pertinent information on student performance (result of Step 1A of planning process)
- the goal(s) adopted for improving Chapter 1 students' achievement (result of Step 1B)
- the explanations considered by the school teams as to why the achievement problem(s) exist (result of Step 2A)
- the changes in practice planned by the school teams (result of Step 2B)
- the activities undertaken during 1990-91 school year to plan and implement changes in practice (result of Step 4)
- the activities undertaken during 1991-92 school year to plan and implement changes in practice (result of Step 4)
- the results of any monitoring and evaluation activities conducted during 1990-91 and 1991-92 (result of Step 5)
- the activities planned for school year 1992-93.

To provide an overview of the breath of these school districts' program improvement activities, two summary tables are presented. Table 1 notes the goal(s) on which each school team has focused its efforts.

- Eight schools are seeking to increase Chapter 1 students' interest in reading on a daily basis, hoping that they will discover reading to be a rewarding activity in its own right.
- Eleven schools are seeking to improve Chapter 1 students' ability to respond to reading comprehension and other higher order thinking questions.
- Three schools are seeking to improve the quality of Chapter 1 students' writing.
- Two schools are seeking to improve Chapter 1 students' mathematical problem-solving skills.
- Eight schools are seeking to improve Chapter 1 students' performance on the reading/language arts section of their district's standardized achievement tests, while two schools are seeking to improve Chapter 1 students' performance on the mathematics section of their district's standardized achievement test.

Table 1

Goals of Program Improvement Efforts

School District	Increase student interest in reading on a daily basis	Improve student ability to respond to comprehension and higher order questions	Improve quality of student writing	Improve mathematics problem-solving	Improve student performance on standardized achievement tests		Increase students' success in other content areas: social studies and sciences
					Reading	Math	
Allentown SD	X	X	X		X		
Bethlehem SD	X	X			X		
Delaware Valley SD		X	X				
Hanover Area SD	X	X					
Jim Thorpe Area SD		X			X		
Nazareth Area SD	X						
Northwest Area SD		X			X		X
Reading SD	X	X			X		
Scranton City SD							
Bancroft				X		X	
McNichols	X	X			X		
Valley View SD	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Wayne Highlands SD	X	X			X		
Wyoming Area SD		X					

Key: X = Factor-related explanations for achievement problem(s) considered by school team.

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- One school is seeking to improve Chapter 1 students' success in other content areas (social studies and science).

Table 2 highlights the factor-related explanations that school teams considered and the ones on which they are taking action.

- One school considered student attendance (factor 1), two schools considered the lack of opportunity to learn specific skills or to appreciate the rewards of reading (factor 1) to be possible explanations for the achievement problem(s), and one school considered ways of increasing students' engagement with reading activities (factor 1). The latter three schools initiated activities to address these factors.

- Four schools considered and sought to ensure that the skills students worked on were built on prior learning and were aligned to what would be assessed (factor 2).

- One school considered and sought to affect the level of success students experienced in their daily reading activities in school and at home (factor 3).

- One school considered and sought to affect classroom management (factor 4).

- Four schools considered the lack of high teacher expectations (factor 5) to be a possible explanation for the achievement problem(s). Three schools initiated activities to raise teacher expectations regarding what Chapter 1 students can learn.

- Twelve schools considered the substance and methods of instruction being provided Chapter 1 students (factor 6) to be a possible explanation for the achievement problem(s). All initiated activities to improve instruction being offered Chapter 1 students related to the goal(s).

- Twelve schools considered the lack of parental support for their Chapter 1 student's learning (factor 7) to be a possible explanation for the achievement problem(s). Nine schools initiated activities that sought to increase parental support.

- Six schools considered the substance and alignment of the current basic skills program (factor 9) to be a possible explanation for the achievement problem(s). All initiated activities to improve the alignment of its basic skills program.

- Six schools considered the lack of structures and procedures to help school staff improve instruction (factor 10) to be a possible explanation for the achievement problem(s). All initiated activities to strengthen cooperative planning and/or staff development activities.

It should be noted that by joining in the project, all school teams are undertaking activities to strengthen basic skills leadership in their school (factor 11).

Table 2

Factor-Related Explanations Considered and Acted Upon

SCHOOL DISTRICT	STUDENT-RELATED FACTORS			CLASSROOM-RELATED FACTORS				SCHOOL-RELATED FACTOR			
	Factor 1 Attendance, Opportunity, Engagement	Factor 2 Skills Studied	Factor 3 Daily Success	Factor 4 Classroom Management	Factor 5 Teacher Expectations	Factor 6 Instruction	Factor 7 Parent/Family Involvement	Factor 8 School Climate	Factor 9 Basic Skills Program	Factor 10 Improving Instruction	Factor 11 Basic Skills Leadership
Allentown SD				(x)	(x)	(x)			(x)	(x)	◯
Bethlehem SD		(x)				(x)	(x)		(x)		◯
Delaware Valley SD					(x)	(x)	x				◯
Hanover Area SD					(x)	(x)	(x)			(x)	◯
Jim Thorpe Area SD						(x)	(x)			(x)	◯
Nazareth Area SD						(x)	(x)		(x)	(x)	◯
Northwest Area SD						(x)	x		(x)	(x)	◯
Reading Area SD		(x)				(x)	(x)		(x)		◯
Scranton City SD											
Bancroft		(x)				(x)	(x)				◯
McNichols	(x)					(x)	(x)				◯
Valley View SD	(x)	(x)				(x)	(x)		(x)	(x)	◯
Wayne Highlands SD	(x)		x				(x)				◯
Wyoming Area SD	x				(x)	(x)	x				◯

Key: x = Factor-related explanations for achievement problem(s) considered by school team

(x) = Factor-related change in practice planned

(x) = Factor-related change in practice implemented between 1990 and 1992

◯ = Factor addressed by project design

Allentown School District - Midway Manor Early Childhood Center

The Midway Manor Early Childhood Center joined the project during the summer of 1991, when a team from the school participated in the project's August workshop.

Achievement problem(s): Significant numbers of students enrolled in the Center do not exhibit the oral language skills expected of 4 and 5 year old students.

Goal(s): The Center is a reconfigured school, whose mission is to provide effective education to children, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten. Its program improvement goal is to enhance children's oral and written language development.

Explanations for achievement problem(s) considered: Students need to be involved in a whole language program (factor 9) that sets high expectations for what students should accomplish (factor 5), that uses class time effectively (factor 4), and that develops all of the language-related skills (factor 6). Teachers will need staff development to implement these changes (factor 10).

Planned changes in practice: To incorporate whole language philosophy into instructional activities aimed at developing the oral and written language used by students.

Activities being undertaken in 1991-92: The school team worked through the five-step planning process in the fall of 1991. As a result of the planning process, teachers were involved in the planning and delivery of staff development activities. Specifically, a series of workshops for staff on whole language and related practices was offered (e.g., story retelling), and a long-term activity to establish peer coaching groups was initiated.

A doctoral student is conducting a multi-year study of teacher behavior and teacher-student interaction in the Center. This study is expected to provide information about patterns of instruction (e.g., whole group versus small group instruction) and patterns of teacher-student interaction (e.g., percentage of teacher talk to student talk). Information from this study will help school staff plan staff development.

Evaluation: The school team reports that teachers are using strategies presented in staff development workshops, that 50 percent of the students exhibited mastery of story retelling at the kindergarten level, and that students are showing increased interest in books. The staff are planning to adopt or develop other assessment instruments that can help them monitor students' growth.

Plans: The school staff will continue to work through implementation of developmentally appropriate practices designed to enhance oral and written language development. The school is planning a joint inservice with the local Head Start organization to help with transition to kindergarten. It also is planning to expand its work with grade one teachers to improve the transition on the other end of kindergarten. The team will begin to involve the other kindergarten teachers in the District.

Bethlehem Area School District - Thomas Jefferson Elementary School

The Thomas Jefferson Elementary School joined the project during the summer of 1991, when a team from the school participated in the project's August workshop.

Achievement problem: Chapter 1 students in the second grade do not read fluently; it is difficult to involve them in independent reading.

Goal(s): To improve second grade students' reading fluency. Indicator: "running records" taken in the fall of 1991 and the spring of 1992.

Explanations for achievement problems considered: Second grade students who are delayed readers often have had to concentrate so hard on their decoding skills that they often do not develop fluency in reading (factor 2). These students have little experience reading beyond their basal reading books, in part because the school has not had books within the classroom setting that they could independently read (factors 6 and 9), and in part, because reading is not an activity they do regularly at home (factor 7).

Planned changes in practice: Second grade Chapter 1 students will take home each evening a trade book that they will read aloud to their parents. Such practice should help them improve their reading fluency as well as their understanding and appreciation of literature.

Activities undertaken in 1991-92: The school team worked through the five planning steps during the fall of 1991. The following activities were planned and undertaken.

The school purchased Story Box and Rigby Books for use with the second grade Chapter 1 students.

A meeting with parents of these Chapter 1 students was held in January. The purpose of the daily take-home book was explained. Staff showed the parents how to read with their child and how to talk with their child about the story and the vocabulary used in it.

The second grade Chapter 1 students began to take home a book every night. A note for parents accompanied the book, explaining what was to be done. A system for borrowing and returning books has been set up, using more able students as librarians. When a child returned a book, he or she took a new book. Records were kept of books borrowed by each child.

In class, teachers and children read and reread familiar stories in a "big book" format. Students also took part in shared reading, adding new story lines to vary the words in familiar texts. Writing activities were planned to help students respond to the reading and to encourage them to create their own stories.

Some Chapter 1 students voluntarily participated in the Keystone State Reading Association's Family Reading Month in April. To participate, family members read together for 15 minutes each day.

Evaluation: "Running records" were taken on each child in the fall. Throughout the year, students' oral reading was being closely monitored. This spring, running records were taken again. The spring's running records showed a decrease in the number of self-corrections recorded on the fall's running records, thereby indicating that fluency has improved.

Teachers observed a noticeable improvement in the students' behavior from the fall. Students who were unwilling or uninterested in reading now eagerly read. They also transfer reading skills from little books to reading in their basal readers.

On the average, second grade Chapter 1 students achieved the desired outcomes for 1991-92. It is also hoped gains in Reading Comprehension will be made from spring 1991 to spring 1992 on the MAT Achievement Tests.

Plans: The fluency program will be continued in 1992-93 with the new 2nd grade students.

Next year, we would like to include Chapter 1 First Grade students and feel they should be ready for this program by the middle of the school year.

We also hope to have our First Grade Chapter 1 students included in the 1992-93 UGI/RIF grant.

UGI/RIF has proposed a grant to provide three books to 1,114 first grade students in all Bethlehem Area School District schools next year. The UGI/RIF proposed grant for $5,013 must be matched with $1,671 in local funds for a total of $6,684 with which to purchase books for all first graders. Elementary schools who choose to participate will either provide these matching funds through PTO grants or from individual building budgets.

A schoolwide activity that will reinforce the Chapter 1 effort with parents is a five session workshop on "Assertive Parenting Skills," which will be offered to all parents in October 1992. Parents of Chapter 1 students, in particular, will be invited. As part of the workshop, parents will be introduced to strategies for setting up a place for study at home, establishing a homework routine, helping with homework, and responding to children's needs and demands in a friendly, reasonable, and firm way.

Delaware Valley School District - Delaware Valley Elementary School

Delaware Valley Elementary School joined the project in the summer of 1990.

Achievement problem(s): The staff's initial definition of the achievement problem was: Chapter 1 students generally do not respond correctly to the literal comprehension questions (particularly, 3rd grade students) or the inferential comprehension questions (particularly, 4th grade students) on the Metropolitan Achievement Test.

The staff refined its definition of the problem to focus on two groups of students: students who become Chapter 1 students after grade 3 and students who do not exit the Chapter 1 program by the end of grade 4. Both groups of students are unable to answer the inferential comprehension questions on the Metropolitan Achievement Test and are identified by their classroom teachers and the reading specialist as also being poor writers.

Goal(s): To improve Chapter 1 students' reading and writing abilities.
Indicators: student performance on comprehension items on the Metropolitan Achievement Test, and student written work.

Explanations for achievement problem(s) considered: Lack of high teacher expectations regarding what Chapter 1 students can learn (factor 5) and the effects of those expectations on instruction (factor 6). Also considered was the possible lack of parent involvement in support of their students' learning (factor 7).

Planned changes in practice: Instruction provided by both regular classroom teachers and the reading specialist will increasingly reflect whole language techniques and will also incorporate the use of computer-assisted instruction.

In addition, the school plans to teach as part of parent meetings how parents can work with their children at home to reinforce their children's learning to read.

Activities undertaken in 1990-91: The school team worked through the first three planning steps. As part of that process, the team surveyed teachers about their perception of Chapter 1 students and about what they were capable of learning, as well as about the level of support those students received from their parents. The information collected led the team to focus on teacher expectations and instruction.

The team explored staff development options that might be undertaken to increase teachers' understanding of the capability of Chapter 1 students. It also identified examples of practices that would be consistent with the types of changes it determined should be made. These examples included the use of: reading and writing learning centers, children's literature, cross-grade reading partners (1st and 2nd grade students with 5th and 6th grade students), microcomputers in each classroom and each Chapter 1 lab in a manner consistent with IBM's "Teaching and Learning with Computers" (TLC) approach, Rotary readers in every classroom (community role models), an incentive program to reinforce outside of school reading, and "Reading Extravaganzas and Literary Lunches to reinforce love of reading.

Activities undertaken in 1991-92: During the fall, the staff worked on the school's long-range plan; it incorporated into that plan many of the suggestions made by the school team regarding how the school might improve reading and writing of its Chapter 1 students.

The development of Reading and Writing Learning Centers was the topic of several staff development meetings conducted by the principal for staff at each grade level. In addition, the school conducted staff development for all staff on implementing IBM's TLC approach; that staff development is continuing. The district leadership is concurrently conducting staff development sessions on reading and writing instructional strategies.

Evaluation: The school team reported at the 1990-91 year-end meeting that the planning process had encouraged their school staff to look more closely at student achievement data and to identify the needs of specific Chapter 1 students.

Achievement data showed that Chapter 1 children exceeded state-mandated NCE growth for the 1990-91 school year. Delaware Valley Elementary met 100 percent of its desired outcomes during this same school year. NCE results were higher than any other school in the district.

The school team reported that in comparisons of writing samples of students participating in IBM's TLC program and of students not in the program, students using TLC scored higher. TLC students also read more and, from teachers' perspective, behaved better.

Plans: The school team plans for 1992-93 school year are to continue expanding the use of practices that will contribute to the improvement of student reading and writing.

Hanover Area School District - Lee Park Elementary School

Lee Park Elementary School joined the project in the summer of 1990.

Achievement problem(s): Chapter 1 students do not actively engage in recreational reading and do not respond well to higher order questions about their reading. Parents of Chapter 1 students are not involved in their child's learning.

Goal(s): Improve Chapter 1 students' interest and involvement in recreational reading, and involve parents in their children's reading/learning.

Explanations for achievement problem(s) considered: Lack of parental involvement in their children's learning -- specifically in learning to read (factor 7), and lack of staff development for teachers (factor 10) that would provide them strategies to motivate students to engage in recreational reading. Also, students did not experience daily success in reading (factor 3).

Planned changes in practice: The school staff will proactively reach out to parents, offering resources to help them acquire necessary skills to help their children at home. The school's reading program will incorporate motivational activities designed to encourage increased recreational reading. Teachers will develop and share motivational reading activities to encourage reluctant readers.

Activities undertaken in 1990-91: The school team worked through the planning process. It chose to initiate the following activities.

School staff provided a "Storyteller" workshop and STEP for interested parents. They also used Hooked on Reading, DEAR, Project Swap, and visiting storybook characters to encourage reluctant readers. Teachers also chose materials for classroom library.

Activities undertaken in 1991-92: The project goals have been incorporated into the superintendent's and elementary principal's goals. Parent fall conferences were scheduled to accommodate parents' schedules. Parents were enlisted to support actively their students' outside-of-school reading. Parents completed and submitted forms each week, describing the reading done at home.

Sustained silent reading is occurring each day throughout the school. Storybook characters read books. Students attend theatrical productions. Incentives for reading were provided.

Before the end of the year, whole-class literature readings occurred as part of regular class routines, a book swap was held, and workshops were made available to parents.

Evaluation: District and Chapter 1 standardized test data reflect marked gains.

Parental involvement forms indicate that for a three month period, 1,688 student/parent reading involvement sheets were returned. Students read 4,153

books during a five-month period. Forty-five percent of students participated in the annual book swap.

Teacher reported increased recreational reading. This anecdotal records described students' excitement about letters from authors, the theatrical productions, the books in classroom libraries, and their desire to share their excitement about books. There has also been an increase in school library book circulation.

Plans: Plans for 1992-93 include: (1) maintain current activities with a different theme, (2) encourage parents to read at home by offering library books for loan, (3) provide workshops to parents on reading, (4) offer corresponding books/videos as a follow-up activity to novels that classes read, and (5) provide class sets of trade books for classroom reading to supplement basal program.

Jim Thorpe Area School District - L. B. Morris Elementary School

L. B. Morris Elementary School joined the project in the summer of 1990.

Achievement problem(s): Chapter 1 students do not answer correctly the literal comprehension questions about a passage that they have read (based on analysis of student performance on SRA standardized achievement test and the basal end-of-year test, and on teacher observations during reading groups).

Goal(s): Increase the proportion of second, third, and fourth grade Chapter 1 students who are able to answer literal comprehension questions about what they read. Indicators: student performance on comprehension items on SRA standardized achievement test and on basal-related tests (note: students are much more successful on basal-related tests than on the SRA test).

Explanations for achievement problem(s) considered: Teachers, in general, only use basal materials to teach reading; moreover, they do not provide students with opportunities to apply reading skills in the other content areas (conclusions from a teacher survey) (factor 6). Teachers do not have an opportunity to investigate and put into practice current theory and instructional methods for improving reading (factor 10). Parents need to be involved in support of their children's learning to read (factor 7).

Planned changes in practice: The school team will implement an ongoing staff development program that enables teachers to explore the implications of current theory and practice. Daily instructional activities will use a more diverse set of reading materials and encourage students to apply reading skills in social studies and science activities. Parents will be encouraged through workshops to read aloud regularly with their children and to help their students learn to spell.

Activities undertaken in 1990-91: The school team worked through the first four steps of the planning process. The team met with the Superintendent on the program improvement plan, and sought his support. Two workshops were conducted for teachers: one on promoting reading development in general, and one on activities and techniques for meeting the needs of students having difficulty in reading. Chapter 1 reading specialists began regularly attending grade group meetings. An informational brochure detailing the Chapter 1 program was developed, printed, and distributed to staff, administrators, school board, and parents.

Activities undertaken in 1991-92: The district Chapter 1 coordinator continued to provide follow-up assistance to teachers learning to apply the techniques that were featured in the spring of 1991 staff development workshops. To meet a need expressed by staff for more interaction and support, a group of regular and Chapter 1 staff are participating in a Peer Coaching training program. To increase parent awareness and involvement, parent workshops in spelling and reading aloud have been conducted, along with a follow-up motivational project in reading aloud.

Evaluation: Teachers charted the reading strategies that they used over two three-week time periods; these charts showed increases in the use of the reading strategies addressed during the staff development workshops. Teachers

used a "discussion and independent" work checklist to describe student participation in reading-related class discussion and student independent work. There was a five percent increase in student participation and a one percent increase in independent work, according to data collected.

Plans: The staff development program on reading techniques will be continued and expanded to include miscue analysis and flexible grouping. More classroom teachers will participate in the Peer Coaching program. The use of trade books as part of the reading program will be investigated. The district will begin shifting the focus of the Chapter 1 program from a 2-6 remedial program to a K-4 early intervention program by adding a first grade program to the current 2-6 program.

Nazareth Area School District - Bushkill Elementary School

Bushkill Elementary School joined the project in the summer of 1990.

Achievement problem(s): Chapter 1 students generally perform satisfactorily on standardized achievement tests. They, however, show little interest in reading for pleasure on a regular basis.

Goal(s): To improve students' attitude toward reading, making it a rewarding activity in its own right, and thereby, increasing the amount of independent reading the students do in school and at home. To increase students' application of reading skills in other content areas.

Explanations for achievement problem(s) considered: Lack of recreational reading activities and literature-based activities in the daily instructional activities (factor 6), lack of parental support for reading on a daily basis (factor 7), lack of clear expectations regarding how teachers should balance the basal program and the use of literature (factor 9), lack of trade books for the classroom (factor 9), and lack of staff development opportunities to help teachers implement a literature-based program in their classrooms (factor 10).

Planned changes in practice: Include literature and recreational reading in the school's language arts program and in daily classroom activities, supported by an ongoing staff development program. Parents will be encouraged to support students' recreational reading, resulting in parents and their children more frequently reading together at home.

Activities undertaken in 1990-91: The school team worked through the five steps of the planning process and began to implement changes in practice. Specifically, a staff committee identified literature that they wanted to incorporate in the instructional program, and resources were reallocated to purchase some of those materials. The committee worked out a process for sharing the purchased materials. The committee also developed a "literature card" to record the specific books that students used.

A series of inservice sessions was held for the staff on Big Books and literature-based reading programs; these sessions involved teachers from neighboring districts who had implemented literature-based programs. Teachers undertook the development of "literature projects," and time was set aside for teachers to share literature-based instructional strategies. The reading specialists shared their expertise and did demonstration lessons. In addition, three Chapter 1 teachers and five regular teachers attended the Bloomsburg State University Reading Conference in May.

School staff actively promoted April as parent-child reading month, and it recognized children who had read books at home with their parents. Interested teachers initiated a "Reading Day," during which students from grades 5 and 6 worked for an entire day with students from grades K-2 on a variety of reading activities.

Activities undertaken in 1991-92: The literature/reading committee was expanded and set out to plan reading activities that would involve students in reading for fun throughout the year (e.g., story book character parade at

Halloween in October, activities and displays related to the Wizard of Oz in November, Holiday books in December, etc.). In addition, student book talks have been made part of daily announcements on the school's closed-circuit television system. A book publishing center has been established; it is being staffed by volunteer parents. A writer from Sports Illustrated discussed writing magazine articles with students in grades 4 through 6.

Teachers attended workshops and conferences that featured sessions on literature-based reading/language arts programs. Those that have attended these workshops and conferences have shared their experiences at faculty meetings. The spring inservice day will focus on this topic.

Last fall, six two-hour programs were offered parents; they addressed such topics as: at-home reading activities, children's literature, and strategies for helping children develop a life-long reading habit. These sessions were repeated in the spring.

Evaluation: The Garfield Reading Survey was administered in the fall of 1990 and the spring of 1991 to the school's student body. The comparison of student responses showed some changes in student attitudes; the positive changes appeared to correlate with those classrooms and grade levels where literature was being used more widely. Though there was considerable variability in the gains or lack of gains demonstrated by individual students and groups on the Garfield Reading Survey, the results were encouraging.

Nearly 100 percent of the staff participated in, at least, one of the professional development activities related to "whole language" conducted during the 1991-92 school year. On a year-end questionnaire, staff reported increased involvement with reading promotion events, and use of "innovative" strategies. They reported that students were more interested in reading books and sharing them with other students, and were more interested in writing independently.

Approximately 20 parents attended "Parents as Partners in Reading" sessions. More than 200 parents participated in school events during the spring, 90 percent of the first grade children's parents came to school to read to their child's class, and 25 parents started serving as volunteers. Teachers reported that the parents were reinforcing school work and that the quality of homework had improved.

Plans: The staff are committed to expanding their use of literature and their design and implementation of a wide variety of motivational activities. They have made an integrated language block on the school's schedule as a goal for 1992-93, and they have expressed an interest in "process writing" as a focus for future staff development and classroom activities.

Northwest Area School District - Hunlock Creek Elementary School

Hunlock Creek Elementary School joined the project in the summer of 1990.

Achievement problem(s): Chapter 1 students are not performing at the 40th percentile on the reading subtest of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, nor on comprehension items. Chapter 1 students were not transferring reading skills and interests to the content areas of science and social studies.

Goal(s): (1) Improve Chapter 1 students' skill at answering comprehension questions about what they are reading. Indicator: student performance on comprehension subtest of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. (2) Develop Chapter 1 students' study skills -- particularly, those aimed at improving reading comprehension. Indicator: student performance on "Study Skills Inventory." (3) Increase Chapter 1 students' mastery of content-related vocabulary. Indicator: performance on tests assessing mastery of Social Studies Word List. (4) Increase Chapter 1 students' interest in reading books on social studies and science-related topics. Indicator: book circulations from classroom and school libraries.

Explanations for achievement problem(s) considered: Lack of alignment of reading curriculum with skills assessed by Iowa Test of Basic Skills (factor 9), lack of direct instruction on study skills (factor 6), lack of intensive student experience in school or at home with stimulating content-related stories and books (factors 6, 7, and 9), and lack of cooperative planning between regular and Chapter 1 teachers (factor 10).

Planned changes in practice: Extend the in-class Chapter 1 program in reading and mathematics to social studies and science. Expand the literature-based program to include literature related to social studies and science topics. Use both of the above activities to increase cooperative planning by regular and Chapter 1 teachers.

Activities undertaken in 1990-91: The school team has worked through the five steps of the planning process. In February, the team implemented a "crash" course for students on "taking the Iowa." Staff began to research and develop lists of trade books that would relate to the social studies and science curriculum. Chapter 1 staff delivers services in regular classrooms. Staff were encouraged to link reading and the content areas and to use more trade books.

Activities undertaken in 1991-92: The focus of activities is on the 2nd and 5th grades. In those grades, the in-class Chapter 1 program is being continued, and Chapter 1 and regular classroom teachers are jointly planning lessons. Classroom libraries of trade books related to the content area curriculum have been purchased. The district's inservice program has been devoted to Whole Language approach.

Evaluation: In 1990-91, regular teacher feedback reinforced the efforts of Chapter 1 resource teachers to work in regular classrooms and to help Chapter 1 students apply skills to content-related tasks. Analysis of spring of 1991 achievement test data suggested that changes in practice were having positive effects; in addition, the analysis helped staff identify particular item formats that many students were finding difficult. Neither the skills

inventory nor regular teachers' grades proved to be useful indicators of student progress.

In 1991-92, the staff developed a Content Word Survey for both 2nd and 5th grade students. It was administered in the fall of 1991 to assess students' prior knowledge of the terms and concepts that will be taught in the content areas. It was readministered in the spring to assess the extent to which students have mastered the terms and concepts identified. The staff also experimented with the use of "Reading Response Notebooks" as a method for gathering information about students' progress in reading.

Plans: The staff will undertake a substantial revision of its reading program. They plan to incorporate process writing and publishing in the content areas. They will also expand the use of "Response notebooks" to social studies. In order to encourage greater reading of and interest in non-fiction trade books, they will establish non-fiction classroom libraries and develop "non-book report" projects based on the books and involving parent participation.

Reading School District - Lauer's Park Elementary School

Lauer's Park Elementary School joined the project in the summer of 1991.

Achievement problem(s): The Chapter 1 students of concern are overaged and are having difficulty meeting basic academic requirements.

Goal(s): To increase Chapter 1 students' recreational reading, and to improve those students' study skills and test-taking skills.

Explanations for achievement problem(s) considered: Lack of opportunity and support in school and at home for recreational reading (factors 6, 7, and 9), and lack of direct instruction on study skills and test-taking skills (factors 2 and 6).

Planned changes in practice: The school is addressing the achievement problem by implementing a transition grade program that is referred to as BASE (Basic Academic Skills Enrichment). The components of the program include: an integrated curriculum that emphasizes language development skills, socialization skills, and fine arts experiences; the development of a nurturing relationship between teacher and student; the design of instructional activities that respond to students' learning styles, use cooperative learning methods, and foster a positive self-image; the in-class provision of Chapter 1 services (Option IV); and the provision of a summer program.

Within this context, the school's Chapter 1 program improvement effort is focusing on encouraging in-school and at-home support for recreational reading and on providing direct instruction on study skills and test-taking skills.

Activities undertaken in 1991-92: A reading incentive program was run throughout the school year to promote recreational reading. To increase parental support for student learning, in general, and reading, in particular, all school staff, including BASE staff, have received training in the "Mom and Pop" program. BASE parent academies were held in January. Parents were invited to shadow their children on "Cooperative Learning Day," this April.

In April, BASE teachers provided instruction on test-taking skills. A BASE summer school (MIBS -- multicultural, intergenerational BASE summer school) program for 45 children was planned for two weeks in August.

Evaluation: Based on records of books read, there was an increase in the amount of recreational reading done by BASE students, particularly when compared to reading done by regular classes. Review of test results showed that BASE students improved their scores on the reading comprehension subtest of the MAT and on in-class spelling tests. Based on a parent survey, increased numbers of parents were involved in helping their children, and parents reported a more positive attitude toward school.

Plans: The BASE summer school will be conducted in August. In 1992-93, schoolwide sustained silent reading will occur daily and a reading incentive program will again be implemented to promote recreational reading. During the first faculty meeting, there will be a demonstration of "cooperative learning

centers" and teachers will be encouraged to observe the centers operating in the BASE classroom. The program to develop students' study and test-taking skills will be strengthened. A parent academy will be conducted in the fall, and a parent/student theme day in the spring.

Scranton City School District - Bancroft Elementary School

Bancroft Elementary School joined the project in the summer of 1991.

Achievement problem(s): Most 2nd and 3rd grade Chapter 1 students have difficulty applying computational skills to solve word problems and to everyday situations that involve math (e.g., time and money).

Goal(s): Chapter 1 students will successfully apply computational skills when solving word problems. Indicator: student performance on the applications section of the standardized achievement test; students demonstrate in their daily mathematics work their ability to express in their own words what a word problem is asking, to respond correctly to what the problem asks, and to show increased understanding of mathematical concepts and terms.

Explanations for achievement problem(s) considered: Lack of high interest activities that present math as a life skill (factors 6 and 9), lack of experience applying math skills at home (factor 7), and lack of reading skills and knowledge of math vocabulary (factors 2 and 6).

Planned changes in practice: Use as part of instructional process such strategies as: role playing, student-created story problems, and student competitions. Provide parent workshops on at-home math activities. As part of workshops, distribute materials that can be used at home. Provide direct instruction on math vocabulary and on strategies to use when reading word problems.

Activities undertaken in 1991-92: School team oriented staff to program improvement effort in September. The activities were focused on grades 3 and 4. Materials for high interest activities obtained and distributed to teachers (e.g., newspapers, TV Guide, play money, mathematics games). Real life experiences provided -- for example, Chapter 1 students made a field trip to a Farmers' Market; Chapter 1 students role played "store," and Chapter 1 students served as cashiers in the school's Santa Workshop.

Teachers were encouraged to teach strategies for reading word problems (e.g., reading-rereading, highlighting key words and phrases) and to provide direct instruction on vocabulary. Teachers were also encouraged to have students create story problems. Teachers were invited to share effective activities and, whenever possible, to serve as peer coaches.

A parent workshop was conducted to explain the program and to provide parents with math games that they could use at home.

Evaluation: The school team evaluated the effectiveness of the program by surveying the students' parents in the fall and again in the spring about their students' attitudes toward mathematics, by administering a questionnaire to teachers to obtain their observation of the changes they made in their classroom and about the effectiveness of those changes, and by comparing student performance on the application section of the standardized test from the spring of 1991 to the spring of 1992.

Based on the evidence collected, students were provided more opportunities to engage in math applications activities, their participation in those activities increased, and their performance on the math applications section of the Stanford Achievement Test improved.

Plans: The program will be expanded to include 4th grade Chapter 1 students.

Scranton City School District - McNichols El Plaza Elementary School

McNichols El Plaza Elementary School joined the project in the summer of 1990.

Achievement problem(s): Most 3rd and 4th grade Chapter 1 students do not read books every day. Most students are not able to summarize the stories they do read and/or answer comprehension questions about what they have read.

Goal(s): Chapter 1 students will increase the amount of reading that they do outside of school. More specifically, Chapter 1 students will be able to summarize the stories that they read and answer comprehension questions about those stories. Indicators: student performance on the reading comprehension items of the standardized achievement test, and observations of staff who are meeting with students each week about the books they are reading.

Explanations for achievement problem(s) considered: Students do little or no reading outside of school (factor 1), school staff do not encourage students to do outside reading (factor 6), and parents do not actively support their child's reading at home (based on information obtained by a parent survey) (factor 7).

Planned changes in practice: Implement a multi-faceted program to encourage Chapter 1 students to read books outside of school. The program includes: providing high interest books for reading at home, assigning a staff member to meet with the student once a week to discuss the books the student has been reading, providing training for parents on how to read with their child, and offering a number of motivational activities.

Activities undertaken in 1990-91: The school team completed the five-step planning process. They identified a wide range of activities that could encourage Chapter 1 students to read books outside of school. The team, in cooperation with the school staff, implemented the following in grades 3 and 4. The school staff conducted a workshop for parents on how they can help their child to do supplemental reading (Pair Reading Program). Students were provided with high interest paperback books; sometimes, students were introduced to those books in class, and sometimes by videotape. Students were assigned to a staff person (approximately, six students per staff person), who conducted a weekly interview with each student about the book the student has been reading. A checklist was completed for each book that was read.

The school made arrangements for field trips to the public library for students and their parents: it also provided students with the experience of hearing local personalities and resource people read aloud and talk about books that interest them.

In school, classroom teachers made reading a book a part of the daily program.

Activities undertaken in 1991-92: Based on the first year evaluation, the staff continued the program in all of its facets, extended it to grades 2 and 5, and involved increasing numbers of teachers in the conferencing with individual students about what they have been reading. In addition, the program, Accelerated Reader, has been implemented; it provides a collection of paperback books for students to read and a computer program that administers a series of comprehension questions about each book.

Evaluation: The school team evaluated the effectiveness of the program by analyzing student files that contain information about books read and about students' responses to staff questions during student-staff interviews, by reviewing student performance on the reading comprehension section of the standardized achievement test, by administering a questionnaire to teachers to obtain their observation of changes in students' performance, and by surveying parents to obtain their perception of the effects of the program.

The evidence collected shows that students increased the amount of time that they spent on reading and that students are more positive about reading. In addition, students' comprehension scores on the Stanford Achievement Test increased.

Plans: The school staff will continue to expand to larger numbers of Chapter 1 students both the one-on-one conferencing about books being read and the use of the Accelerated Reader.

Valley View School District - Valley View Elementary Center and Middle School

Valley View Middle School joined the project in the summer of 1990; the project was expanded to the Elementary Center during the school year.

Achievement problem(s): Chapter 1 students' overall performance is low on both the reading and the mathematics sections of the district's standardized achievement test.

Goal(s): To improve Chapter 1 students' overall reading and mathematics performance. Indicator: students' performance on reading and mathematics sections of the district's standardized achievement test.

Explanations for achievement problem(s) considered: Lack of cooperative planning between regular and Chapter 1 teachers (factor 10) and the resulting lack of alignment of regular and Chapter 1 instruction (factor 6), lack of direct instruction on selected skills measured by the test (factors 9 and 12), lack of parental support for homework completion and the related failure of Chapter 1 students to complete homework that would provide them opportunities to practice what they were being taught (factor 7), and Chapter 1 students' lack of test-taking skills (factor 2).

Planned changes in practice: Implement a procedure that would enable the Chapter 1 resource teachers to align their instruction to the topics and skills being taught in the regular classrooms. Introduce a modified whole language approach as part of the reading program. Provide instruction on basic math skills using Diagnostic Prescriptive Mathematics program. Include as part of the Chapter 1 instruction, encouragement and assistance with homework assignments and direct instruction on test taking skills.

Activities undertaken in 1990-91: The school team worked through the planning process. Based on the results of the process, the Chapter 1 resource teacher designed a form for teachers to complete on a bi-weekly basis that would outline topics and skills being taught in the regular classes; the Chapter 1 resource teachers used information provided on the form to guide their planning.

The Chapter 1 resource teachers undertook the task to help Chapter 1 students to improve their approach to homework. The teachers also provided instruction on test-taking skills.

Activities undertaken in 1991-92: The Chapter 1 resource teachers at the beginning of the year provided classroom teachers an analysis of student performance on the subtests of the achievement test, along with suggestions as to which skill areas needed more attention. As a by-product of the analysis of the mathematics subtest, the sequence of mathematics topics was reordered to ensure that students received instruction on the topics with which they had the most difficulty.

Chapter 1 resource teachers attended workshops on the Accelerated Reader program, "reading books independently," "activities to promote a love for

reading," PCRP II, and the whole language approach, the Diagnostic Prescriptive Mathematics program, Algebra is Child's Play, problem-solving, and Chapter 1 in-class models.

Chapter 1 reading resource teachers introduced trade books into the Chapter 1 classes and used them to teach skills that were aligned with those being taught through the basal series in the regular classrooms. Chapter 1 reading resource teachers also made arrangements for students to meet authors (e.g., Young Authors' Day at Marywood College) and provided information to parents, so that they could participate in Reading Day at the Mall, sponsored by the local reading association.

Based on the mathematics and "in-class model" workshops, the math resource teacher began to implement the in-class model with 5th grade teachers. In addition, he used manipulatives and processes that are part of the Diagnostic Prescriptive Mathematics program to teach and reinforce math skills being addressed in the regular classrooms.

Chapter 1 resource teachers conducted a homework program for Chapter 1 students on Monday and Wednesday evenings. The program was designed to provide supervision and assistance that will enable Chapter 1 students to finish homework assigned by their regular classroom teachers. As part of the Wednesday evening program, parent volunteers conducted read-aloud and book-talk sessions. On Tuesday evenings, the Chapter 1 mathematics resource teacher conducted a program aimed at providing parents the skills to assist their children with homework, in general, and with mathematics homework, in particular.

Evaluation: The school team received informal feedback from teachers and parents that the changes in practice made in 1990-91 were positive ones.

At the end of the 1991-92 school year, the school team reported that students have increased their independent and recreational reading in both school and at home, and that their scores on the comprehension subtest of the California Test of Basic Skills had improved. According to teachers, students had improved their ability to read and comprehend grade level material that they read either orally or silently.

Plans: The school team plans to extend the changes in practice made this year to grades 1, 3 and 4. In addition, the team plans to initiate another planning/program improvement cycle.

Wayne Highlands School District - Damascus Secondary School

Damascus Secondary School joined the project in the summer of 1991, when they attended the project's August workshop.

Achievement problem(s): Chapter 1 students' reading comprehension scores suggest a need for increased concentration and practice in reading.

Goal(s): (1) To encourage students to read recreationally; and (2) to encourage parent involvement by creating meaningful training for parents on how to work with their children at home and in the classroom.

Explanation for problem(s) considered: Reading instruction in the district is based on the philosophy of "whole language." Staff believe that children learn to read by reading, that children learn best on books that are "real," and that the foundations of literacy are laid in the early years and strongly influenced by the home environment (factor 7, parent involvement). Chapter 1 students often see reading as a school subject and do very little for pleasure. Many parents would like to encourage their children to be better readers, but do not know how.

Planned changes in practice: Create a parent training program to help Chapter 1 parents become aware of how they can help their children to be more successful in school. Share ideas with parents on how they can create a more literate environment at home. Invite parents to work as "Parent Partners" in classrooms in the Damascus School.

Activities undertaken in 1991-92: A Chapter 1 teacher and a classroom teacher conducted a program called our "VIP Program." Through their efforts, parents have been trained to help in classrooms throughout the school and have also learned how to help to encourage their children at home. A Parent Handbook has been created for use in the VIP Training Program.

Evaluation: Both parents and classroom teachers have confirmed increased student interest and success, and a reduction in student-behavior problems. The staff credit both the VIP program and the involvement of parents in classrooms as contributing to these outcomes.

Plans: A Parent Resource Room will be available in the Damascus School, staffed by parent volunteers, and filled with material that parents can sign-out for in-class or home use. A Parent Publishing Team will be formed to prepare final copies of student-authored books. VIP Parent Training workshops will be continued at the Damascus School and possibly extended to another schools in the district.

Wyoming Area School District - Tenth Street Elementary School

Tenth Street Elementary School joined the project in the summer of 1990.

Achievement problem(s): Chapter 1 students -- particularly, at the 3rd grade level, along with a small group of non-Chapter 1 students have difficulty answer higher order thinking questions (e.g., inferring, drawing conclusions, generalizing).

Goal(s): To improve students' ability to respond to inferential comprehension questions. Indicators: student performance in small discussion groups and on teacher-prepared written exercises, on critical thinking exercises on basal unit tests, and on the comprehension items on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills.

Explanations for achievement problem(s) considered: Teachers do not systematically use questioning techniques to engage Chapter 1 students in higher order thinking, and they do not provided direct instruction on higher order thinking skills (factors 5 and 6). Student attendance (factor 1) and parental support (factor 7) were also considered.

Planned changes in practice: Teachers will incorporate higher order thinking/questioning techniques into their daily lessons. Teachers will also develop expectations that Chapter 1 students can learn to address higher order questions.

Activities undertaken in 1990-91: The school team worked through the first four steps of the planning process. They planned and initiated a staff development program aimed at developing staff understanding of a framework of higher order questions and staff skills at planning and delivering lessons structured by such questions; the program is referred to as, "Questions for Life." The staff development focused on 4th grade teachers.

Activities undertaken in 1991-92: The staff development provided follow-up support to 4th grade teachers and involved 5th grade teachers as well as two 3rd grade teachers. As follow-up to formal sessions, the specialist and supervisor conferenced with each teacher regarding plans and concerns.

Evaluation: On a questionnaire, teachers reported that they were "enthusiastically, using the "Questions for Life" model. Observations by the supervisor and the principal documented the use of the model and its extension to a number of subject areas. Teachers also reported personal satisfaction with their students' responses to the use of the model.

Observation of lessons also documented student understanding of the teacher's questioning techniques (e.g., moving from basic to higher order levels, using "pause"). Students' performance on comprehension items on unit tests and on critical thinking questions presented on the Jostens Integrated Learning System improved.

Plans: Implement peer coaching techniques to 4th and 5th grade teachers and provide inservice training on the project model to 1st, 2nd and 3rd grade teachers. Develop more evaluation criteria which may be used to evaluate effectiveness of project; include nonverbal communication. Videotape Chapter 1 and regular LEA teachers using components of model in classroom setting, and

score videotaped lessons for evaluation purposes. Compare pilot school with other building results on the Pennsylvania Assessment Exercises.

III. SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

This section presents three perspectives on the accomplishments of the project. The first describes the project tasks that were undertaken and completed. The second summarizes the specific accomplishments of the individual projects: what kinds of changes in practice were made by the participating school teams and what effects those changes appeared to be having on students. The third presents the results of a survey that asked school teams to report on "other effects" that the project has had.

Project Tasks Completed

As a result of the first year's work, the project has accomplished the following.

- Ten school districts volunteered to participate in the project.
- Each district selected a school and helped the principal of that school organize a program improvement team involving both Chapter 1 and regular classroom teachers, the principal, and where appropriate, district staff.
- The 10 school teams participated in a two-day, August, 1990 workshop that oriented them to the planning process and enabled them to begin work on the first two steps of the process.
- During the school year, most teams completed the five-step planning process and implemented changes in practice that they hoped would address identified achievement problems.
- In support of school team planning, the project sponsored over the course of the year, three one-day workshops. During these workshops, teams shared experiences and lessons learned, and had time to work on specific planning tasks.

More detailed information about these accomplishments are presented in the June 30, 1991 Progress Report.

As a result of the second year's work, the project accomplished the following.

- Four new schools from four new districts joined the project. In addition, one new schools from continuing school districts joined the project. (Two schools from the first year chose not to participate in project activities during the second year.)
- School teams from the six new schools participated in a two-day August workshop that oriented them to the planning process and enabled them to begin work on the first two steps of the process. Staff from three of the existing teams served as coaches to the new school teams.

- The school teams that were continuing in the project began to diverge in the types of activities they were undertaking. Some focused their activities on implementing plans developed during the previous year; some extended the changes in practice that they had made in 1991-92 to new grade levels, new subject areas, and to other schools in their districts; and some initiated a new round of improvement planning.

- Several school teams decided to participate in staff development programs being offered by the Intermediate Unit.

- In support of individual school team's work, the project sponsored over the course of the year, three one-day workshops. During these workshops, teams shared experiences and lessons learned, and had time to work on specific planning tasks. In the final workshop, six teams conducted for their colleagues, roundtable seminars on a particular change in practice that they were making.

- Four representatives from participating schools or school districts made a panel presentation on the project at Pennsylvania's Federal Program Coordinators Conference and a subsequent presentation at the annual meeting of the International Reading Association.

Summary of School Team Accomplishments

At the end of the 1991-92 school year, the school teams, besides providing information for the summary of their improvement activities that appears in Section II, also provided a summary of "evaluation" activities to date -- that is, they described the evidence that they had collected and any "conclusions" they had draw about specific improvement activities, about the changes in practice that they were making, and about the effects that those changes were having on students. From both sets of information, the following summary of accomplishments was prepared.

Improvement Activities

Each of the 13 schools reported conducting one or more of the following improvement activities.

- Staff development activities were conducted by nine school teams. Those activities addressed such topics as: B.A.S.E. Parent Academies, Accelerated Reader Program, IBM Writing to Read, and Questions for Life (higher order questioning).

  (Allentown, Delaware Valley, Hanover, Jim Thorpe, Nazareth, Reading, Scranton-Bancroft, Valley View, Wyoming)

- Parent workshops/training sessions were conducted by six school teams; five school teams trained parents to provide at-home support for their child's reading, and one school team trained parents to act as in-class "coaches."

  (Bethlehem, Hanover, Reading, Valley View, Wayne)

- Cooperative teacher planning sessions were established by two school teams. (Note: while two schools chose cooperative planning as a primary improvement activity, many of the other schools indicated that some level of cooperative planning and/or sharing occurred.)

  (Northwest, Scranton-Bancroft)

- Materials purchases were made by six school teams; these materials included trade books, other reading materials, and math materials.

  (Bethlehem, Delaware Valley, Hanover, Nazareth, Reading, Scranton-Bancroft)

- Assessment measures were developed by one school team; one school team developed vocabulary surveys and a study skills test, and the other created a portfolio approach to reading assessment.

  (Northwest)

- A brochure was developed by one school to increase school district leadership's and school staff's knowledge of the Chapter 1 program.

  (Jim Thorpe)

Changes in Teacher and Classroom Practice

Each of the 13 school teams reported that there had been changes in teacher and classroom practices as a result of the improvement activities they conducted, and a number of the teams described the evidence that they had collected to substantiate these changes.

- Teachers in 12 schools increased their repertoire of strategies for teaching reading; these strategies included: story re-telling, Pause and Seek, and higher order questioning.

  (Allentown, Bethlehem, Delaware Valley, Hanover, Jim Thorpe, Nazareth, Northwest, Reading, Scranton-McNichols, Valley View, Wayne, Wyoming)

- Teachers in six schools increased the amount of time spent on reading (e.g., sustained silent reading), and/or the variety of reading-related activities conducted (e.g., guest storybook character readings, theatrical programs, role playing).

  (Allentown, Hanover, Jim Thorpe, Reading, Nazareth, Scranton-McNichols)

- Teachers in one school developed and implemented reading and writing learning centers that included computers in support of both activities.

  (Delaware Valley)

- Teachers in one school paired first and sixth grade students as "Book Buddies", to provide mutual support for reading and language arts activities.

  (Nazareth)

- Teachers in one school trained parents to be in-class "coaches;" those parents then helped with reading activities and instructional management tasks.

  (Wayne)

- Teachers in one school developed a record system for book borrowing which students were responsible for operating and maintaining.

  (Bethlehem)

- Teachers in three schools introduced incentives into their classes, in order to encourage students' recreational reading (e.g., book swap, Principal's Challenge).

  (Hanover, Nazareth, Reading)

- Teachers in one school, with parent support, created a Book Publishing Center.

  (Wayne)

- Teachers in two schools used new measurement/assessment techniques: in one school, teachers kept "running records" of students' oral reading; teachers in the second school initiated "reading response journals" for assessing student reading and developed a "content vocabulary survey" and "study skills test" to assess student progress.

  (Bethlehem, Northwest)

- Teachers in one school, both Chapter 1 and regular classroom, coordinated their efforts to improve student computational skills and increase the time they spend on math applications.

  (Scranton-Bancroft)

Parent-related Changes

Eight school teams reported that there had been changes in how Chapter 1 parents worked at home with their children, as a result of the improvement activities they had conducted. A number of these teams also described the evidence that they had collected to substantiate these changes.

(Bethlehem, Hanover, Nazareth, Reading, Scranton-Bancroft, Scranton-McNichols, Valley View, Wayne)

- Increased numbers of Chapter 1 parents associated with six schools read at home with their children.

  (Bethlehem, Hanover, Nazareth, Reading, Scranton-Bancroft, Valley View)

- Chapter 1 parents associated with one school used specific "Mom and Pop" strategies at home to help their child learn to read.

  (Reading)

- Chapter 1 parents in one school not only read at home with their children, but kept records of their child's progress and reported that progress to their children's teachers.

  (Hanover)

Effects on Students

The school teams reported that the changes in teacher and classroom practices, and the changes in the support Chapter 1 students received at home were having the following kinds of effects.

Nine school teams focused their activities on improving reading instruction and/or reading-related activities at home.

- Chapter 1 students in five of these schools increased the amount of time they spent on reading activities in class.

  (Hanover, Jim Thorpe, Nazareth, Scranton-McNichols, Valley View)

- Chapter 1 students in seven of these schools increased the time they spent on recreational reading at home.

  (Bethlehem, Hanover, Nazareth, Northwest, Reading, Scranton-McNichols, Valley View)

- Chapter 1 students in two of these schools demonstrated improved performance of specific skills (e.g., story re-telling skills).

  (Allentown, Valley View)

- Chapter 1 students in one of these schools demonstrated increased fluency in reading both in basal readers as well as trade books.

  (Bethlehem)

- Chapter 1 students in two of these schools improved performance on vocabulary and comprehension skills on teacher-made and publisher tests.

  (Northwest, Wyoming)

- Chapter 1 students in four schools demonstrated increased mastery of specific skills as measured by standardized test results (e.g., comprehension, vocabulary, spelling).

  (Reading, Jim Thorpe, Scranton-McNichols, Valley View)

- Chapter 1 students in nine schools demonstrated increased interest in recreational reading.

  (Allentown, Bethlehem, Delaware Valley, Hanover, Nazareth, Northwest, Reading, Scranton-McNichols, Valley View)

One school team focused its activities on improving Chapter 1 students' ability to address higher order questions.

(Wyoming)

- Its Chapter 1 students participated more actively in classroom discussions.

- Its Chapter 1 students learned to keep journals and to code the questions in their journals.

- Its Chapter 1 students demonstrated increased performance on the comprehension items in unit tests.

One school team focused its activities on an integrated program to develop reading and writing skills.

(Delaware Valley)

- Its Chapter 1 students read more...their participation in Reading Incentives has increased.

- Based on writing samples, its Chapter 1 students showed an improvement in writing in a comparison with students who are not in the integrated program.

Two school teams focused some of its improvement activities on mathematics instruction. One reported the following effect of its activities.

(Scranton-Bancroft)

- Its Chapter 1 students increased their participation in math applications activities.

- Its Chapter 1 students demonstrated improved performance on math applications section of standardized test used to evaluate the Chapter 1 program.

Other Project Effects

At the end of the second year, the school teams were asked to complete a survey regarding other project effects. The survey specifically asked the teams to rate on a 4-point scale ("very true," "true," "somewhat true," "not true") the extent to which their participation in the project had affected: (1) staffs' understanding of Chapter 1 program/goals, (2) level of effort staff made to achieve the Chapter 1 desired outcomes, (3) staffs' working relationships, (4) the kinds of planning steps and activities they had undertaken, and (5) their use of ideas/practices of other project schools. They were also provided space to describe other effects than the five presented above. Following each rating, the teams were asked to describe in specific terms the effect. A summary of the ratings of the 13 teams and some examples of their descriptive comments are presented below.

1. **Participating in the project has affected our district/school leaderships' and staffs' understanding of Chapter 1 programs, the desired outcomes, and program improvement.**

Very True	True	Somewhat True	Not True
7	6	0	0

All 13 school teams reported that participation in the program has, at varying levels, increased staffs' understanding of the Chapter 1 program. Five of the school teams specifically reported that "the principal's and classroom teachers' understanding of the program has increased." One school team wrote, "the entire staff have become intensively aware of Chapter 1 requirements and [the] total impact on overall achievement of students." Another team wrote, "Staff no longer views Chapter 1 as something separate...staff now realizes that Chapter 1 children are the responsibility of the entire staff."

Two school teams mentioned that they had provided staff with specific written materials describing the Chapter 1 program and its desired outcomes, and that these materials had stimulated in one case, "discussions with staff [in order to help them] better understand those outcomes," and in the other case, staff expressions of "appreciation for the concise and complete explanation of the program."

2. **Participating in the project has affected the level of effort that our leadership and staff are making to achieve the desired outcomes of the Chapter 1 program.**

Very True	True	Somewhat True	Not True
8	5	0	0

Seven school teams reported that as a result of their schools' participation in the project, their principals have become more actively involved in Chapter 1 and were expending more time and effort on Chapter 1 planning tasks. One school team reported that its principal had become a reading "coach" to Chapter 1 students.

Three schools reported that more staff time (either additional or reallocated time) was being focused on Chapter 1 goals and outcomes. For example, one team reported that "the administration was continuing to provide time and resources for staff development on an in-house basis," while another team wrote that "staff meetings are used more to discuss the Chapter 1 program." A third team remarked that "knowing that we had to prepare for specific [project] meetings helped us to focus our efforts..."

3. **Participating in the project has affected the ways in which our school leadership and staff (e.g., Chapter 1 and regular classroom teachers and administrators) are working together.**

Very True	True	Somewhat True	Not True
6	5	2	0

All 13 of the school teams indicated that as a result of their participation in the project, Chapter 1 and regular classroom teachers and administrators are communicating better with each other and are now working more collaboratively. Examples of what the teams wrote regarding improved communication included the following.

- "Lines of communication between building administrator, Chapter 1 and regular teachers have increased and strengthened."
- "Participation...has not only strengthened the communication among B.A.S.E. team members but also the communication between B.A.S.E. team members and other classroom teachers."
- "The work we have done...has been of great benefit to communication and consistency between Chapter 1 and classroom teachers."
- "With the many constraints and demands on teachers' time, the structure of the project helped staff pull together with a concerted effort."

Examples of what the teams wrote regarding collaboration included the following.

- "Classroom teachers and paraprofessionals are incorporating activities to enhance oral language development, and the classroom teacher and reading specialist have shared and modeled ideas and activities..."
- "Involvement of the principal and two second grade teachers [not previously involved]...led to mutual cooperation and understanding. One of the second grade teachers said, "Never before did I have the chance

to work closely together with the principal, the curriculum specialist, and my colleagues to plan and carry out such a project."

- "Ideas and strategies...were shared and presented to regular classroom teachers both informally and during faculty meetings, and administrators were involved throughout the planning and implementation..."
- "Staff and administration are more willing to share ideas and expertise..."
- "Classroom teachers and Chapter 1 staff have coordinated reading instruction..."
- [The project has] "...helped re-emphasize to administrators and staff one of the roles of reading and math specialists as resource persons for modeling new techniques and providing optional means of assessment."

4. **Participating in the project has affected the specific activities and tasks our leadership and staff undertake to plan improvement efforts (c.f., the activities and tasks outlined in the projects resource book).**

Very True	True	Somewhat True	Not True
8	4	0	0

(Note: One school did not respond to this item.)

Only three school teams provided detailed comments about how participation in the project had affected specific activities and tasks...undertaken to plan improvement activities. One team wrote how the "staff has been involved in the planning stages in selecting a goal for school improvement." Another team wrote that "membership in the Task Force has allowed us time to make Chapter 1 group planning a priority." The third team wrote, "when looking at school problems we have used evaluation tools provided by the project's resource book...[and] conducted pre and post surveys of teachers."

One school reported that "fourth and fifth grade teachers had regrouped their reading classes to implement the new teaching model" and also had "videotaped lessons so that a shared understanding of the factors in the project affecting student achievement were clearly identified."

Two of the school teams specifically mentioned the usefulness of the resource book; specifically, one team wrote that "the project's resource book was a superlative organizational guide," and the other wrote that "the resource book was excellent for evaluating and planning."

5. **Participating in the project has resulted in our building upon the ideas/ practices of other project schools.**

Very True	True	Somewhat True	Not True
2	1	6	4

Two schools reported that as a result of participating in the project, they had adopted or adapted ideas/practices of other project schools. One team wrote that "often we adopted other district's ideas to accommodate our needs." The other team reported, "We have implemented the idea of read aloud workshops for parents which was presented by another district in the task force."

6. **Other Effects**

The survey also asked the school teams to described other effects that their participation in the project had had. Eight teams responded. A review of their statements led to the identification of four additional effects.

- Effect on Teacher Expectations

  One school reported that teachers initially did not believe that the project could make a difference with difficult students, yet that belief changed when the staff observed the positive reactions of the students to the big books and their participation in the choral reading. According to the team, seeing students "borrowing books nightly and eagerly reading during independent time, convinced all staff that the project was working." The team quotes one teacher as saying, "I was a Doubting Thomas. I really did not believe that this project would make a difference."

- Effect on Self-Image

  Two schools reported that participation in the project enhanced the school's and the staff's self-image. One team noted how "the credibility and positive image of our program [was] enhanced by our school's representation at the IRA conference in Orlando," while the other team wrote that "there is...greater self-esteem among all staff members as a result of our being asked to present our program at Seven Springs [and at IRA]. A school district in Colorado contacted us for information regarding our in-class Social Studies Program."

- Effect on Staff Experimentation and Risk-taking

  Two school teams reported that participation in the project has provided increased opportunity for staff to experiment and try out new ideas and alternative models. One team reported that "more people are willing to try new strategies and experiment with the 'new' language philosophy."

The other team wrote, "The task force project...has provided our Chapter 1 teachers with an opportunity to try new ideas and projects."

- Effects on Parent Attitudes and Support

Two school teams reported that the project has positively affected parents' attitudes about staff's efforts to help their children, and that parents have become advocates of the schools' programs and practices. One team wrote, "Our B.A.S.E. parents have become the most active and vocal supporters of schoolwide initiatives..." The other team reported that the project "...has encouraged parent support for their children, district children, and district programs."